Claims

1.   A data processing system including an operating system whose functions
5   include operating one or more applications, the operating system including a
display subsystem for controlling a visual display, characterised in that:

the operating system includes a display area fixing system operable in
response to user input to provide the user with the option of designating an
10   area, being part of an image displayed on the visual display, to remain in a
fixed position on the display, and

the display area fixing system acts directly on the display subsystem in
parallel with any application running in the data processing system.
15

2.   A data processing system as claimed in claim 1 in which the visual
content of the designated area is copied to remain in the fixed position whereby
it is also visible in its original positional relationship to other displayed
information.
20

3.   A data processing system as claimed in claim 1 or 2 in which the option
is provided as part of the user menu.

4.   A data processing system as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the
25   information displayed in the designated area is updated according to the current
status of the application corresponding to the designated area.

5.   A data processing system as claimed in any preceding claim in which
the user is able to move the designated area with in the area of the visual
30   display.

6.   A data processing system as claimed in any preceding claim in which the designated area is movable within the area of the visual display in response to user input.

7.   A data processing system as claimed in any preceding claim in which a plurality of areas may be designated by the user to remain in one or more fixed positions on the display.

8.   A data processing system as claimed in claim 7 in which the plurality of areas may be arranged in an overlapping configuration.

9.   A data processing system as claimed in claim 8 in which the topmost designated area is the one most recently designated.

10. A data processing system as claimed in claim 8 or 9 in which the user is able to define the order of overlapping fixed areas.

11.   A portable communications terminal having a visual display and a data processing system as claimed in any preceding claim.